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## OPEN LETTERS.

### Added synonymy.

In noticing the revision of the N. Am. Alsineæ by Dr. B. L. Robinson, in the August number of the GAZETTE, was it *fair* to say that in using the name *Spergularia*, he has "added to the synonymy of this much vexed group"? Certainly *he* did not add that name to the synonymy, for it is the one which has been in most general use since the time of Presl, and until botanists can settle the relative precedence of the resurrected names Tissa and Buda, those who follow the general usage of half a century can hardly be the ones who "disturb our peace"!—JOHN H. REDFIELD, *Philadelphia, Pa.*

[Naturally no reference was made to the addition of *Spergularia* to synonymy, but to the consequent addition of new binomial combinations.—EDS.]

### Marchantia as a type.

Dr. Underwood's objection to the use of *Marchantia* as a type in morphological courses of study expressed in several places recently and reiterated in his vice-presidential address at Brooklyn last month seems to me based upon a misunderstanding. I use this plant constantly in my classes, but not, as Dr. Underwood seems to imply it must be used, as a type of the heterogeneous Hepaticæ. Certainly no teacher at all familiar with morphology could make so evident a mistake as to do that. I use it, and I think others also use it, as a type of the very development which Professor Underwood in his admirable address used it to illustrate, viz., the greatest possible complexity of the *thallus*. For neither of the other two lines of development, of a leafy axis or of the sporogone, do I take types from the Hepaticæ. The possibilities in both these directions I find far better illustrated in one of the true mosses, such as a *Bryum* or a *Brachythecium*. Were I writing a laboratory handbook for a course in morphology, such as Arthur, Barnes, and Coulter's *Plant Dissection*, or Bower's *Practical Botany*, I am inclined to think I should include the time-honored *Marchantia* as one of the bryophyte types, in spite of the fact that it is a representative of only a small group of hepatics and that the lowest.—R.